

**JOINT MEETING  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**November 4, 2004**

**Board of Finance Present:** R. Pagani-Chairman, R. Clements, J. Rachek

**Board of Selectmen Present:** D. Milanovich-First Selectman, D. Frawley, P. Charter, N. Way, A. Miller

**Board of Education Present:** D. Roberson-Chairman, M. Blanchette, D. Keune

**Others Present:** Dr. Packman-Supt. of Schools

Chairman Robert Pagani called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. He stated that tonight's meeting was to firm up some of the ideas regarding communications from the last meeting.

Dennis Milanovich stated that he feels the website is a good way to communicate with taxpayers and to use it to publish department priorities. He was told that there is unlimited space on the website so he felt that publishing the entire budget was not a problem.

Mr. Rachek felt that good information was disseminated at the budget hearing but that only a small group of people ever hear it. He suggested that perhaps a copy of that presentation of the budget be mailed out in newsletter form.

Mr. Miller thought the town should spell out the dangers or not funding certain items.

Mr. Leighton felt that the boards could inform taxpayers but not advocate for certain items.

Mr. Blanchette stated that perhaps taxpayers could post their opinions and comments on the website. It was also brought up that any information can be disseminated before the referendum date is set. Mr. Milanovich stated that the only "cost" for the website is the indirect labor.

Everyone agreed that it would be good if more people in town would get involved and informed.

Mr. Clements read into the record a commentary he had written. He stated that the reason it has come to this point is that taxpayers are not confident in the Town Administration. He feels that this has stemmed from the bad press before and during the 2003 town election. He feels that we need to restore taxpayers' confidence. He feels that we need to educate the people of the reason for the needs and state mandates.

Mr. Milanovich stated that he respected Mr. Clements opinion but did not agree. He feels that the town needs to invest in the economic development commission and planning and zoning, which are the growth control boards.

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Mr. Charter stated that he feels a 1 mill increase will be the only increase accepted by taxpayers this coming budget year. He would like to see the town look at lease/purchase options, bonding of rolling stock and Board of Education contract give backs and early retirements.

Mr. Leighton suggested that we should see what other towns are doing to educate the electorate. Mr. Roberson stated that the Board of Education has met with groups to discuss the budget and that there are probably other groups in town that Town officials could meet with to discuss the budgets and reasoning behind the budget.

Mr. Milanovich stated that he stood up at a CCM meeting and advocated for State government to fund teachers' salaries and benefits which would mean an increase in state tax. He wasn't sure how they perceived what he was saying.

Dr. Packman stated that at the forum that occurred last week, the data that came out was that Ellington is an emerging community with low cost education and low capacity. Only 9% of our taxes are funded by industry. The public needs to know the Town's long range plans rather than seeing reactionary spending.

Mr. Pagani stated that he did not like to bond rolling stock and that he agrees we should pursue industry in town.

Mr. Leighton stated that people need to be asked to be involved. He suggested sending out a letter to residents to remind them to vote at a specific place and time and to let them know specifically what may not be done if something is not funded.

Mr. Blanchette stated that he felt the web site was a good vehicle for information and also the voter signs placed in town. Mr. Miller felt that more signs should be put out.

Mr. Pagani adjourned the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Submitted by \_\_\_\_\_  
Lori Smith, Clerk